DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 250 765 EA 017 220

TITLE Australian Education Council. First Annual Report for 1983.
INSTITUTION Australian Education Council, Melbourne.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 38p.
PUB TYPE Reports - General (140)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Apprenticeships; *Computers; Educational Finance; *Educational Technology; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment; Enrollment; Equal Education; Higher Education; Migrant Education; Mobile Classrooms; Multicultural Education; Reading Achievement; *Reports; Rural Education; School Community Relationship; Science Education; Special Education; Statistics; Surveys; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Aboriginal People; *Australia

ABSTRACT

This report presents the accomplishments and activities of the Australian Education Council in 1983. The council held two meetings in 1983. One, in Canberra, addressed conditions regarding Commonwealth funding for capital purposes, criteria for registration of nongovernment schools, participation of young people in tertiary education, and a national youth policy. The second meeting, held in Adelaide, set up a Task Force on Education and Technology, as well as considering youth policy, aboriginal education, equity and access to tertiary education, Commonwealth schools and commission guidelines, and new arrangements for recurrent funding of schools. The report gives an overview of major developments in education in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory, and the Commonwealth as a whole. Included in the report are four appendixes. (MD)

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First Annual Report of the Australian Education Council

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Australian Education Council

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1983

Australian Education Council

Published by
the Australian Government Publishing Service
for the Australian Education Council
Canberra 1984

c Commonwealth of Australia

ISSN 0814-3749

Printed by Graphic Services Pty Ltd, 516-518 Grand Junction Road, Northfield, S.A. 5085

Senator the Hon S M Ryan
Commonwealth Minister for
Education and Youth Affairs -
AEC Chairperson 5 March 1983
to 31 May 1983

The Hon L M F Arnold MP
Minister of Education and
Minister for Technology,
South Australia - AEC
Chairman 1 June 1983 to
31 December 1983

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CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

As Chairman of the Australian Education Council for its 47th meeting held in Adelaide in November, 1983, it gives me great pleasure to write this introduction to the AEC's first Annual Report.

Education in Australia, in common with the experiences of comparable countries throughout the world, is going through many changes and reassessments as it comes to grips with unprecedented societal pressures caused by the advent of new technologies and continuing high levels of unemployment, particularly among young people.

The challenge for educationalists and policy-makers is considerable if the education system of today is to adequately prepare our youth for the world of tomorrow. The Australian Education Council, as the forum of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers of Education, is working hard to meet this challenge.

The AEC held two meetings in 1983, firstly in Canberra in May under the chairmanship of Senator Susan Ryan, the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, and secondly in Adelaide in November. Consideration of a comprehensive approach to the educational and training needs of young people was an important item of discussion at both meetings, with the Council strongly supporting the inaugural meeting of youth ministers that was held in Canberra in August. Council emphasised the need for a coherent scheme of financial assistance for young people and commended the Report of the AEC Task Force on Youth Policy, which was presented to the 46th Council meeting (Canberra, May 1983), as an important document that would be of use in devising youth policies.

Another key area of concern to the AEC in 1983 was the impact and importance of new technologies on Australian society and the implications this has for the education system. The Council supported the establishment of a national technology policy and pressed for educational programs aimed at developing an awareness and understanding of new technologies. Education will be crucial in preparing our young people for a future world based on intellectual rather than 'out of the ground' resources.

One of the important ongoing activities of the AEC has been the collection and development of a national collection of school statistics. During 1983 the AEC considered important and diverse issues such as the use of computers in primary and secondary schools, Aboriginal education, the development of nurse education in colleges of advanced education, and new arrangements for the current funding of schools. In December the Council issued a report on the registration of

non-government schools which included a number of recommendations regarding minimum enrolment, curriculum and organisational requirements.

1983 was a challenging year for Australian education. The Australian Education Council, as the only education organisation whose membership represents the constitutional authorities responsible for policy making in the field of education, worked hard to meet this challenge. I commend this document to you as a summary of its activities for 1983 and as a guide to the future directions of education policy in Australia.

Lynn M F Arnold
Minister of Education and Minister for Technology
South Australia

PRESENT STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS AND OPERATION OF THE AEC

The Australian Education Council, established in 1936, is the Ministerial Council of Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers of Education in Australia. The New Zealand Minister in recent years has been invited to attend as an observer.

While no recommendations or decisions are binding on members, the Council, operating by consensus, exercises considerable influence on the development of educational policy in Australia. It is the only educational organisation whose membership represents the constitutional authorities responsible for policy making in the field of education and whose concern extends to all aspects of education.

The functions of the Council are to:

- promote the development of Australian education;
- exchange information on education in Australia and abroad;
- maintain high standards of education by national co-operation;
- promote, where desirable, the adoption of consistent policies on education;
- consider the effects of educational policy on community development and national welfare;
- examine the educational provisions necessary for the development of the individual; and
- survey those educational provisions necessary to ensure continuity of an adequate supply of qualified manpower for industry, commerce and the professions.

The Council holds regular meetings every eight months and special meetings for particular items of urgency. The chairmanship of Council, as does the venue for regular meetings, rotates. The future schedule of meetings is:

Victoria	June 1984
New Zealand	January 1985
Western Australia	October 1985
New South Wales	June 1986

The Council is assisted in its activities, particularly in establishing agenda and considering budgetary and other operational matters, by a Standing Committee and an Executive Committee.

Agenda items for the Council are generally limited to matters of national significance where it is felt that debate will promote mutual understanding and the development of a national perspective. Individual agenda items are submitted to the AEC Chairman by Council members. The Chairman, after consideration of the items and consultation with the Executive Committee and Secretary of the AEC, then formally establishes the agenda.

The Secretariat has nine full-time staff, plus a research officer on secondment for two years from Monash University. The Secretary is Dr R K Browne, AM, BA, BEd (Hons), PhD and the Assistant Secretary is Ms M A Crowley, BA, MEd St. Two Education Officers provide professional support services to Council working parties. The Secretariat is located in Melbourne and is attached to the Victorian Public Service. It commenced operation in June 1978 and is funded equally by the governments of the States, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth.

COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN 1983

Council held two meetings in 1983, firstly the 46th meeting in Canberra from 4 to 6 May with the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Senator Susan Ryan, in the chair, and secondly the 47th meeting in Adelaide from 16 to 18 November under the chairmanship of the Hon Lynn Arnold, South Australian Minister of Education and Minister for Technology.

The Canberra meeting saw substantial changes to the Council membership with five new Ministers, resulting from changes in government at the Commonwealth level and in Western Australia and South Australia, and Cabinet changes in Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Key issues that were discussed at this meeting included the conditions regarding Commonwealth funding for capital purposes, criteria for the registration of non-government schools, the participation of young people in tertiary education and a national youth policy.

A report on youth policies was tabled at the Canberra meeting. The report examined youth policies across all areas of government responsibility, as well as in a number of overseas countries. The report was forwarded to various groups and organisations throughout Australia and responses invited.

Working party and committee reports discussed at the 46th meeting covered copyright law, pre-school education and information retrieval systems in education, the latter recommending that a study on the desirability and feasibility of developing an educational data archives system be conducted. The Report of the AEC Committee on School Statistics, one of Council's important on-going areas of concern, was also received.

An innovation in regard to the format of Council meetings introduced at this meeting was the conduct of a seminar on Increasing Participation in Education: Secondary and Post Secondary. The AEC Executive Committee had earlier agreed to conduct seminars on issues of national significance for educational policy at each regular Council meeting. The seminar, the first of a continuing series, proved most successful.

At the 47th (Adelaide) meeting, chaired by the Hon Lynn Arnold, South Australian Minister of Education and Minister for Technology, the seminar was concerned with education and technology. A paper presented by Mr Arnold examined implications for education of recent and likely future developments in technology, and concluded with a case for developing a national policy. A Task Force on Education and

Technology was established with the objective of developing a range of policy options for subsequent Council consideration.

Continuing consideration on youth policy, Aboriginal education, equity and access to tertiary education, Commonwealth Schools Commission guidelines and new arrangements for recurrent funding of schools was given at this meeting. Council received a report of a working party which had proposed guidelines for the registration of non-government schools and resolved that the report be published and publicly circulated.

A report from a working party considering education services for Aboriginals in homeland centres and reports from the School Statistics and Education Statistics Development Committees were also received. Council also established a new working party to consider the further development of basic nurse education in colleges of advanced education; the working party being required to examine and report on common issues arising out of a Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission report on options for the future development of basic nurse training arrangements in Australia.

The Commonwealth Minister announced initiatives in the area of Aboriginal education and member systems were requested to provide information on priorities in Aboriginal education to a working party which the Commonwealth Schools Commission established for advice on policy development and options beyond 1984.

The development of a national schools statistics collection has been a major project of the Council since 1979 when the School Statistics Committee was established to improve the quality of statistics relating to government and non-government primary and secondary education in Australia. The work of this Committee has been one of the significant achievements of the Council. Specific objectives of the Committee are to:

- make recommendations on the scope and format of educational statistics collected by government primary and secondary education authorities of the States and Territories;

- develop guidelines for the appropriate use and valid interpretation of these statistics; and

- negotiate with the agencies to whom confidential or disaggregated data may be provided and develop the conditions to be attached to their publication.

In addition to the eight State and Territory systems, representatives from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs,

the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the National Catholic Education Commission and the National Council of Independent Schools serve on the Committee. During 1983, considerable progress was made in achieving the objectives of the Committee and a full-time research officer was appointed to provide technical leadership for several of the Committee's activities.

Other highlights of the Council's year included the signing of a contract with Dr A D Spaull of Monash University for a jubilee history of the Council as it approaches the 50th anniversary of its inaugural meeting and the adoption of policies regarding access to Council documentation consistent with the principle of Freedom of Information.

LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The Secretariat maintains regular contact and exchanges materials with a number of Australian educational and administrative organisations, such as the National Training Council, the Australian Council for Educational Research, the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development and the Australian Advisory Committee for Awards in Advanced Education. In addition, the AEC has four representatives on the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) Council.

International counterparts of the AEC include the Canadian Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC), the West German Standing Conference of Ministers of Education (KMK) and the Education Commission of the States in the USA. The AEC maintains regular communication with these bodies, as well as the conference of Education Ministers of South-East Asian nations (SEAMEO).

The Secretariat receives an increasing number of overseas and local visitors. Visitors to the Secretariat in 1983 included Council members, Directors-General of Education, Executive Officers of education departments and other educational bodies, senior Australian academics and visiting senior academics and educational administrators from overseas. These continuing contacts help ensure that Council is kept abreast of national and international developments in education. Further, it serves to ensure a continuing channel of communication between Council members and a wide range of members of the educational community.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN MEMBER SYSTEMS - AN OVERVIEW

NEW SOUTH WALES

The Minister - the Hon R J Mulock - announced early in 1983 that he had invited Mr D A Swan, the Director-General of Education, and Dr K R McKinnon, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Wollongong, to advise him of desirable directions for secondary education and foreshadowed the release of a discussion paper. The paper, when released, proposed the establishment of a single Board of Secondary Education to assume the functions of the Secondary Schools Board and the Board of Senior School Studies.

It was recommended that the Board of Secondary Education would have members from tertiary education institutions, the New South Wales Departments of Education and TAFE, both government and non-government school principals and teachers, and parent, employee and employer organisations. The Board would make provision for a continuum of secondary education from Years 7-12 with regard to the need to:

a cater for students with a wide range of needs, interests and aspirations;

b provide for an essential core of learning for all students;

c provide a balance of compulsory and optional studies; and

d provide for centrally determined and school devised studies.

The Board would also be required to develop procedures for student accreditation which make provision for:

a students leaving school at any time after reaching 15 years of age to receive a record of their attainments;

b certificates to be available to students who have completed 4, 5 or 6 years of secondary schooling;

c student records and certificates to include the grade of award received in each unit or course completed (perhaps distinguishing between school assessed and externally assessed achievements);

d a distinction to be made between centrally determined courses and school devised, centrally approved courses; and

e the documentation of schools and students' achievements to include reference to a broad range of experiences at

school, in addition to their performance in courses of study completed.

The discussion paper and public addresses by the Minister and the Director-General stimulated considerable debate about the nature and content of secondary education. In general the establishment of the Board was widely supported. The proposal concerning the retention of the Higher School Certificate and its issue after a public examination received considerable attention and support.

In 1983, TAFE continued to expand its education and training provision, particularly amongst youth, and several major developments occurred. In 1983, capital expenditure on building projects totalled $51.639m. Two new colleges were opened, bringing the total number of colleges to 92. New construction projects commenced at 25 existing colleges and major construction projects continued at another 10 colleges. During the year, the Department commenced the first stage of the establishment of the computer network by installing general purpose educational computing facilities in eight of its major colleges.

In November, the State Minister for Health announced that responsibility for the basic training of nurses would be transferred from hospitals to colleges of advanced education from the start of 1985, these courses being funded by the Department of Health. The Minister for Education established a State Planning Group to oversee this transfer, with representatives of Education and Health portfolios and State Treasury.

The Education Commission of NSW released a report, Listening and Responding : A Review of Education in Rural New South Wales during 1983. The report was the first comprehensive review of rural education in the State and was commissioned by the NSW Government late in 1981 and was the result of over two years' work by the Commission, its Rural Education Working Party, and two Task Forces which focused on the school and post-school sectors respectively. The title 'Listening and Responding' was adopted to reflect the consultative procedures adopted by the Commission and the recommendations flowing from its review. The report presented those issues of major concern within the State and identified a number of areas where much more detailed work is required to identify needs which are related to particular groups or particular communities. The four principles which underlay the recommendations of the Commission were:

. Differences between rural areas

. Differences within rural areas

. The importance of community participation

. The better use of resources through co-operation and co-ordination

As part of its work in developing a portfolio-wide policy on education for youth, the Education Commission set up the following projects:

a a survey of the perceived educational needs of the 15-24 age group (with a special study of the 20-24 age group);

b a study of the information needs of young people vis-a-vis government agencies; and

c a study of the views of young people on education structures and programs beyond the years of compulsory schooling.

In addition, the Commission had a number of other major projects in progress, including a survey of post-school education information needs in rural areas, preparation of an Australia-wide overview of research in multi-cultural education and the preparation of a discussion paper on curriculum development in science, technology and society studies.

VICTORIA

During 1983, several initiatives were undertaken to improve the quality and equity of education in schools in Victoria including steps to ensure the devolution of authority to school communities. School councils were reconstituted to enable parents, teachers, community members and students (where appropriate) to share responsibility for determining school policy within State-wide guidelines. Another initiative, the School Improvement Plan, aimed to assist schools to reflect on their total school practices and to develop ways that improve the learning experiences of their students. During 1983, a pilot scheme for the School Improvement Plan was established involving up to twenty schools in each of the twelve regions. Participating schools received funding on a sliding scale of between $1 500 and $3 500 depending on the size of the school. Corporal punishment in government schools was also abolished in 1983.

At the system level, program budgeting was introduced to enable a more systematic approach to planning and resource allocation and to generate more accurate information for decision-making purposes.

Two reviews undertaken during 1983 are likely to change approaches to resource allocation. The Ministerial Review of Educational Services for the Disabled had as its main objective the right of every child to education in a regular school while the Review of Educational Allowances considered the option of payments being made directly to School councils rather than to parents.

1983, the fifth year of operation of the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission, witnessed the culmination of the Commission's planning activities for the co-ordination and development of post-secondary education in Victoria for the period 1985-87. In January, the Commission forwarded its formal submission for the triennium to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission. The student load and capital components of the submission were subsequently revised in December 1983 for the advanced education and university sectors as a consequence of the Commonwealth Government's decision to provide a further $10m for 3 000 additional student places in higher education for Australia, of which Victoria's share was $3 210 000 for 875 student places.

1983 was an important year for TAFE in Victoria. Most notable was the passing of the Post-Secondary Education (Amendment) Act 1983 which will enable TAFE to respond to community needs more effectively and with more accountability. The Act provided for the creation of a sixteen member TAFE Board with greater power to develop and co-ordinate TAFE in Victoria. Under the Act, the Board was also given responsibility for the administration, organisation, planning and co-ordination of TAFE, with full control over its own budget. The Act also provided for the establishment of ten new regional boards. A TAFE Teaching Service was also to come into operation on 1 March 1984.

The Victorian Institute of Secondary Education is concerned with all matters relevant to the transition of students from secondary school to further studies or employment. During 1983, major initiatives were instituted with respect to the transition of students. Staff of the Institute undertook a study of the participation of 15-19 year-olds in Victoria in education. This proved to have considerable value in re-appraising the situation by highlighting the significance of a range of education/training options not normally taken into account and also in drawing attention to differin the pattern of educational participation of boys and girls in these age groups.

Another VISE initiative involved discussions between educators, employers and union personnel on matters of mutual concern with respect to the need to assist students to gain an understanding of work and its role in contemporary society. On the basis of this initiative, a Schools Industry project is being implemented which focuses on new approaches to this aspect of secondary curricula.

After the election of the new Victorian Government in April 1982, the Office of the Co-ordinator-General of Education has had a threefold emphasis with the aim of achieving the Government's objectives of intersectoral co-operation in education. The three major objectives are in regard to:

- **Information, research and policy development,** including examination of the areas of Youth Policies, Computers in Education, and the total administration of education and curriculum. Reports were issued on the first two areas during 1983, a draft of the third was issued, and substantial progress was made in regard to the fourth area.

- **Inter-sectoral matters,** including investigations of the 'Future Role of the Victorian School of the Arts' and of 'Training Needs for the Film and Television Industry in Victoria'.

- **Co-ordination of information** which was considered to be a prime function of the Office, including Freedom of Information legislation matters and Victorian Public Sector Employment Statistics.

QUEENSLAND

Changes were made within the Queensland Education Department during the latter months of 1983 in a move to rationalise operations and to facilitate the provision of services to two new divisions - the Division of Planning and Special Programs and the Division of Curriculum Services. Art education, music education, physical education and agricultural projects were located within the Division of Curriculum Services.

The Department's policy statement on computers in the curriculum, issued in September, outlined directions for computer use in all areas of State education. The second report of the Computer Policy Advisory Committee on Education to the Director-General considered issues such as the need for a more formal co-ordinating agency within the Department for computing in schools, the need for a review of computing activities in primary and secondary schools and requirements for in-service and pre-service training. Budget provisions were made for some thirty-two teachers to be employed as computer resource staff, with two resource teachers to be located in each of the nine education regions.

Special education services continued to be expanded and decentralised to ensure placement of children with special education needs in schools close to their homes wherever

possible. The Department's policy of integrating more disabled children into local special schools means that schools are now providing for children with a wider range of intellectual, physical, sensory and emotional handicaps.

The implementation of a new science syllabus, which has constituted a major thrust in the primary curriculum over recent years, neared completion in 1983. In-service training for all teachers in the use of the new syllabus and its accompanying documents will continue in 1984. Adoption of a new method of teaching hand-writing was followed by preparation of in-service activities to help teachers introduce the new script. The new form will lead to a linked script which will be gradually introduced into schools, beginning at Year 1 level in 1985.

1983 was a year of significant growth for the Division of Secondary Education. There was considerable increase in the number of programs linking secondary education and technical and further education; the development of programs to widen the vocational aspirations and opportunities of girls, successful continuation of the city/ country exchange scheme and the establishment of an 'extension campus' organisational structure linking Cunnamulla and Hughenden with transition education officers in Brisbane were examples of this development.

A major initiative in distance education was the trialling of increased secondary education facilities to small remote communities where numbers may not enable provision of full-time teaching. Year 8 centres were established to provide facilities where remoteness and excessive travel time placed pressures on students.

One of the major initiatives in TAFE during 1983 was the introduction of out-of-trade apprenticeship programs at three metropolitan and four country colleges. Twelve 'live-work' projects were undertaken, ranging from the restoration of two historic ships at the Queensland Maritime Museum to the construction of a residential duplex on the Gold Coast. The colleges also provided further education covering a range of educational activities such as literacy/numeracy classes, migrant education, personal development, and enrichment (hobby/craft) courses.

In the area of Aboriginal and Islander Further Education, 1983 saw the graduation of the first fifteen students from the two-year full-time certificate course in Aboriginal and Islander Welfare Studies.

The Priority Country Area Program serviced approximately 37 000 students in 262 schools during the year. Previously established projects and units such as the itinerant teaching service, mobile classroom, instrumental music program, mobile field study unit and mobile manual arts unit

continued to operate successfully. New initiatives included the production of a science curriculum video program designed for rural primary schools and a series of video programs for primary social studies.

A significant development in 1983 was the appointment of a full-time officer to co-ordinate activities related to the educational uses of the Australian Communications Satellite System to be launched in 1985. The loan video scheme helped meet the special requirements of distance education through provision of educational programs on video-cassettes to over 370 Schools of the Air families, most of them living outside normal television areas.

The spatial distribution and demographic structure of the school population continued to undergo significant and rapid change, with the number of full-time secondary students increasing and primary student numbers slowly decreasing. Substantial increases in TAFE enrollments were experienced.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Despite relatively stable overall enrollments, 1983 was a year of substantial change and achievement. One change was in the senior administration of the Department. The functional organisation which had existed for over six years was modified by the reintroduction of divisions at the Assistant Director-General level. There are now four Assistant Directors-General responsible for policy and leadership in the areas of resources, primary education, secondary education and technical and further education; the functional organisation has also been retained throughout the directorates.

The election of a new government in February 1983 was followed by a number of new initiatives. The first was the formation of a large representative committee of inquiry into education under the chairmanship of the Hon K E Beazley OA. The Committee was given wide terms of reference and submissions were invited from the public. Over 1 700 written submissions were received and public hearings were held in seventeen centres throughout the State. A confidential interim report was made to the Minister in late December 1983.

A second initiative was the setting up of an Education Advisory Council to the Minister. This group, which is widely representative, has been asked to give early consideration to the principles which should underlie the re-drafting of the Education Act. Subsequently, the Education Regulations will also require re-drafting.

During 1983 there was a good deal of concentration in primary schools on measures designed to increase reading proficiency. Foremost among these was the publication of a comprehensive guide to the teaching of reading in Years K-7. This was accompanied by a major State-wide in-service program which included provision for school closure to allow participation of primary teachers. In addition, a research project was conducted which focused on intensive investigation of the weakest five per cent of readers in a small number of primary schools. This led to the formulation of a series of procedures designed to enable early intervention with children likely to experience difficulties in learning to read. Measures to give effect to these recommendations have been taken for implementation in 1984.

The major development in secondary education in 1983 was the opening of two senior colleges. These institutions, which run in parallel with existing senior high schools, were designed to provide 'second chance' opportunities both for adults who wish to matriculate and students who have left secondary schools prematurely and wish to return to an institution in which an adult ethos applies. The colleges provide an alternative to adult attendance in regular secondary schools - an opportunity which has been accepted by substantial numbers of adults in recent years.

There has been a major development in the Technical Education Division in the development of short courses. These courses, which are of variable length do not lead to a formal award. They are designed to allow interested persons to undertake updating and retraining courses in a large number of occupational areas. The courses, which are planned in consultation with industry and the participants, are organised by the Technical Education Division but may use the expertise of persons from outside the service. To a large extent the courses are self-supporting.

Major developments in post secondary education in Western Australia during 1983 focused on measures to increase participation and improve opportunities. The State has been concerned to improve post secondary education opportunities in country areas and planning took place in 1983 for a new advanced education facility to be opened in Bunbury in 1985. Contracting of advanced education courses was extended from the regional colleges at Karratha and Port Hedland to a new regional college established in Kalgoorlie and arrangements were made for technical colleges at Albany and Bunbury to offer some units from programs of the Western Australian Institute of Technology.

Conscious efforts to link higher education institutions with technology and innovation proceeded during 1983 with a Technology Park being established on land adjacent to the Bentley campus of the Western Australian Institute of Technology. The park will provide a focal point for the

development of high technology with industry with the State Government and the two universities and the Institute working in close co-operation. Initially, work on the park will concentrate on research and development in computer hardware and software and minerals and metals processing but it is expected that work in a wide range of other fields will follow.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Proposals developed in 1982 for a major reorganisation of the Education Department were considered further and revised during 1983. The structure to be adopted in 1984 involves the consolidation of ten regions into five areas, and a reduction in the number of central office directorates. Major operational responsibilities will reside with area directors and a substantial shift in senior staff from central office to areas will occur.

Central office functions will focus mainly on policy development, corporate planning and resource allocation but some services will continue to be provided centrally. Major aims of the reorganisation are to shorten lines of communication with schools, to enhance the status of schools and their role in decision-making, to improve the responsiveness of schools to their community and to increase school effectiveness and school support services.

Early in 1983, the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia released the report of a working party on post secondary education for Aborigines. The report drew attention to the low participation of Aborigines in post secondary education and their consequent under-representation in occupations requiring education and training. Late in 1983, the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia also released the report of an advisory panel on computer education which stressed the consequences for tertiary education of the inevitable penetration of computers into all walks of life. The report drew attention to the necessity, both for economic and social reasons, of seeking to provide the personnel, software and hardware needed if tertiary education is to keep pace with the development and spread of computers.

A sum of $1/4m was included in the 1983/84 South Australian Education Department budget for the purpose of establishing Technology Centres in schools with an emphasis on technologies other than computing. The focus will be on secondary schools with possible opportunities for primary school children to benefit from relevant aspects of the program. It is expected that a range of programs will be mounted in a number of schools in a diverse range of

technologies, including electronics, metal machining and welding, using modern industrial techniques, word processing, experiences with digital readout equipment, technical graphics equipment and automated horticultural and agricultural equipment.

A working party to consider the structure of the school year was established in July 1983 and instructed to advise the Minister of Education on the desirability or otherwise of changing the current school year pattern of terms. The working party, assisted in its task by a reference group, received submissions, analysed the situation in other States, considered various options available and produced a report in December 1983.

The Senior Secondary Schools Students Project (the 4S Project) is a project reflecting concern for the needs of senior secondary students in relation to appropriate secondary schooling for all. This concern was high-lighted in 1982 when the Education Department prepared a policy discussion document **'BEYOND COMPULSION'**, with two associated documents **'CONSULTATION'** and **'IN THE TIME OF NEED: IN TIME OF CHANGE'**.

The project recognised that many schools were already adapting their curriculum to respond to the needs of senior secondary students, and sought to encourage, develop and enhance school-based adaptive practice. The project aims to encourage:

- in all years of secondary school, and particularly the post compulsory years, the development of appropriate educational programs which will foster the continuing and positive involvement of young people in education;
- potential early school leavers to continue their education or to be involved in related training; and
- currently unemployed 15-17 year-olds to re-enter secondary schools, where this is the most appropriate alternative.

TASMANIA

Following the publication late in 1982 of the Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Education Department, 1983 was a year of consolidation rather than widespread innovation. This was coupled with a need for extensive consultations about the effects of implementing the Review's findings. The Review was the first major examination of the structure and organisation of the Education Department in Tasmania and recommended a number of changes to enable a

more efficient use of manpower resources and funds. During March, Cabinet accepted a new organisational structure proposed for the Education Department and endorsed the recommendations of the Review.

Recommendations implemented during 1983 included:

- the commencement of the restructuring of the department into three new divisions - Educational Programs, Resources, TAFE - and the appointment of Executive Directors for each division;

- the review of the operations of existing departmental committees, 167 in all, of which almost half were abolished;

- the retention of TAFE programs within the Education Department rather than these being administered by a separate board; and

- the transfer of the administration of senior secondary colleges from TAFE to the Deputy Director-General of Education, assisted by a Superintendent with specific responsibility for these institutions. Rather than being delayed pending the establishment of the new division of TAFE, this change applied from July, 1983 to allow future planning to be made within the recommended administrative framework.

Arrangements were made in 1983 to subsume the existing School to Work Transition Program within the Participation and Equity Program. The new program was aimed at bringing about wide-ranging changes in schools and colleges, to enable them to give all students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, a rewarding and useful education to the end of Year 12.

While materials development continued in a range of subjects, the completion and launching of a set of multicultural materials was a landmark in this area. Consisting of two books for teachers, two for students and a cultural game, these materials (the MATE project - Multicultural Approaches in Tasmanian Education) were specifically designed to encourage a multicultural perspective in the curriculum of mainly monocultural schools.

The Antarctic Project, partially funded by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), is one of the only two Australian international curriculum projects. In conjunction with the New Zealand Department of Education, it is developing a wide range of learning materials about Antarctica. These were completed in December 1983 and are being trialled in Tasmania, New Zealand, Queensland, Oregon and Chile.

The comprehensive report **A REVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TASMANIA** was released by the Minister

for Education in October 1983. It presented an overview of the educational services available to children with special needs and made a number of recommendations for improving these services. One major recommendation was that the Education Act should be amended to enable the provision of special education legally outside schools, and to allow for early education programs for young or severely handicapped children.

The major focus in computer education for 1983 was the implementation of computing in the primary school area. A clear direction was established for enhancing students' computer literacy by using microcomputers as a learning aid. A major initiative was the development of a package entitled **BIRDS OF ANTARCTICA** which was designed to enhance scientific observation skills and hypothesis formation and testing. This package, built around the data collected in the 1982 summer expedition of the Nella Dan, will be made available to every secondary school in Australia by the Department of Science and Technology.

The Education Department is moving towards providing schools with widespread access to information systems. Schools can communicate with each other via electronic mail, can use microprocessors to access international databases via the TASNET system and can download software onto their microcomputers.

Major enrollment trends evident in the government school system for 1983 included a decline in primary student numbers, but a marginal increase at the junior secondary level and a significant increase at Years 11 and 12, reflected an improved retention rate.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Several major developments took place in the Northern Territory education system during 1983. Of particular significance was the tabling of a policy document, **NORTHERN TERRITORY SCHOOLS - DIRECTION FOR THE EIGHTIES**, in the Legislative Assembly by the Minister for Education in March. As well as confirming many policy directions which had been initiated since 1979, it included several initiatives. Priority concerns included:

- maintaining a uniform curriculum throughout the Territory including computer education;
- encouraging students to stay at school longer and providing higher quality alternative courses for senior students who do not wish to undertake matriculation courses;

- preparing students to cope with advances in computer technology;
- providing for the special educational needs of exceptional children;
- improving services to isolated students;
- ensuring that parental and community expectations are reflected in school programs;
- promoting self-discipline and respect for the rights of others; and
- providing a firmer educational foundation for students of Aboriginal descent.

In June 1983, the overall enrollment in Northern Territory schools was 32 257, 3.5 per cent higher than in 1982. Most of the growth occurred in secondary schools which experienced a 10.6 per cent increase in enrollments. Primary school enrollments on the other hand, increased by only 1.3 per cent and pre-school enrollments by 0.4 per cent.

Continuing efforts were made to improve education services for students in Aboriginal communities, with attention being devoted to the development of appropriate curriculum materials. FEPPI, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, made an increasing contribution to policy considerations affecting education services for Aboriginal students. With its members nominated by communities in fifteen regions approximating language and tribal groups throughout the Territory, FEPPI was able to add a valuable perspective to the issues considered. A major undertaking by FEPPI during the year was its involvement with the Department of Education in the drafting of an information statement which spelt out the Government's strategies for improving the academic opportunities for Aboriginal students.

The process of evaluating and accrediting bilingual programs in Aboriginal community schools also continued during 1983. Academic, operational and social aspects of the programs in each school are assessed by observation, interview and testing. Schools which achieve the aims of bilingual education at a level to warrant the future provision of specialist staff and other resources are accredited. Bilingual programs now operate in twelve Aboriginal languages in sixteen communities. The programs are mostly in larger schools which have about half of the students enrolled in Aboriginal community schools in the Territory.

There has been a considerable increase in the number of teachers applying to join the Northern Territory Teaching Service with more than 2 000 teachers applying during 1983.

A Northern Territory Teaching Service scholarship scheme came into operation at the beginning of 1983, with scholarships being offered to young Territorians to study for initial teaching qualifications at the Darwin Community College. Scholarships are also provided for graduates around Australia to study for the Diploma of Education; these scholarships are offered in the areas of languages and special education.

The Vocational Training Commission, which was established in February 1983 in place of the Industries Training Commission, is responsible for co-ordinated TAFE policy and planning and for promoting activities to enhance opportunities for Aboriginals in employment and training and it is also the regulatory authority for apprenticeships. The Commission encompasses both trade and non-trade training and provides advice to industry on training needs.

In pursuit of the objectives and recognising the need for academic assistance of the highest standard, the Menzies School of Health Research was established in January, in association with the University of Sydney. The Darwin Hospital will become a Special Teaching Hospital of the University and candidature for post-graduate medical degrees of the University may be undertaken through the School. Senior academic staff from the University will be available on exchange or by secondment to assist in specific research activities and research training at the School.

COMMONWEALTH

In March 1983, the incoming Government decided that a single department should have overall responsibility for the co-ordination of all Commonwealth policies affecting young people. As a result, responsibility for youth affairs was transferred from the Department of Employment and Youth Affairs and attached to the Department of Education, which was renamed the Department of Education and Youth Affairs.

The Government's intention in the reorganisation was to rationalise the various schemes of income support for young people and to relate education and training to changing social, economic and technological conditions.

Related to the new approach was the Government's decision to invite the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to review Australia's youth policies and programs. The review team, led by Ms Ritt Bjerregaard, a former Minister for Education and Social Affairs in Denmark, visited Australia in November. The other members of the review team were Mrs Anke Fuchs, a former Minister for

Labour, and then Family Affairs, in West Germany, and Sir Richard O'Brien, Chairman of the Engineering Industry Training Board in the United Kingdom and previously head of the Manpower Services Commission. While in Australia the team visited institutions and organisations in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. Their discussions with Commonwealth and State Government officials covered education, training, employment and income support schemes for young people. They also met groups of young people and representatives of non-government and voluntary agencies working for young people. In November, the team attended the first national meeting of Ministers concerned with youth policies. The meeting, chaired by the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Senator Susan Ryan, was also attended by Commonwealth and State officials.

During the second half of 1983, preparations began for the introduction of the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) from the beginning of 1984. The Government had announced in its financial guidelines to the education commissions in July 1983 that it regarded PEP as the centrepiece of the overall framework of youth policies which was to be developed and which would contribute to the achievement of the national goal of having all young Australians complete a full secondary education or other appropriate education and training. Funding of PEP in 1984 would total $74m.

In April 1983, Senator Ryan presented a number of papers at the National Economic Summit. She chaired the meeting of the Australian Education Council in Canberra in May and chaired the first national meeting of Commonwealth and State Ministers responsible for youth policies in Canberra in November.

The Commonwealth allocated $1 279.9m for the programs of the Commonwealth Schools Commission in 1983, $589.6m for government schools and $661.9m for non-government schools, with a further $46.3m for joint programs. These were allocations of the previous Government. The incoming Government announced its financial guidelines to the Commission for 1984 in July 1983, and allocated $622.7m for government schools, $655.6m for non-government schools and $38.7m for joint programs. The Government also announced that a number of new arrangements would apply in 1984.

Within the amount allocated for government schools, $20m would be provided by the Commonwealth for the upgrading of existing schools serving disadvantaged communities and a further $5m for capital works in schools serving predominantly Aboriginal communities. For non-government schools, the Commonwealth increased per capita recurrent grants for Group 3 schools by three per cent in real terms, and for Group 2 schools by one per cent in real terms. Schools in Group 1 were to receive the same level of per capita recurrent assistance in 1984 as in 1983.

The Government also decided that while it would continue to provide capital and recurrent grants for new non-government schools, allocations to specific schools would depend on an assessment of the impact of the new schools in established areas on existing government and non-government schools. Registration of new non-government schools by the relevant State or Territorial authority would no longer entail automatic eligibility for Commonwealth recurrent grants from the start of 1984. New guidelines for general recurrent and capital grants for such schools were announced at the time of the financial guidelines to the Commission.

The guidelines to the Commission also set out the Government's educational priorities for 1984, which included the establishment of the Participation and Equity Program and a national computer education program, programs to improve educational outcomes for girls, arts education, and the reactivation of the Curriculum Development Centre under a new Council within the Commonwealth Schools Commission.

In the tertiary sector, Commonwealth Government expenditure totalled $2 192m in 1983 - $1 172m for universities, $747m for colleges of advanced education, and $273m for technical and further education. The incoming government's financial guidelines to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission allocated a total of $2 225m for 1984. Of this, universities were allocated $1 186m, colleges of advanced education $752m, and colleges of technical and further education $287m. The TAFE sector was also to receive an additional $29* m from the funds available under the Participation and Equity Program.

The Government directed that in its triennial report for 1985-87, the Commission should focus particularly on the current supply and demand for higher education places, the relative roles and funding responsibilities in the area of the professional development of teachers, the relationship between the tertiary sectors, the future funding of research and research centres, equality of access to tertiary education by disadvantaged groups, TAFE-industry co-operation, adult literacy, TAFE facilities in country areas, higher education in the

Northern Territory, basic nurse training, and arts education and training. The Commission was also asked to report on the effectiveness of its tertiary education programs in terms of improved participation rates and equity, and on further measures to improve participation.

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* All prices quoted are at estimated December 1983 price levels.

APPENDIX I : MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AT THE 46TH AND 47TH AEC MEETINGS

The Hon L M F Arnold MP
Minister of Education and Minister for Technology
South Australia
(Chairman 47th meeting)

The Hon E M Bingham QC, MHA
Minister for Education, Tasmania

The Hon R C Fordham MLA
Minister of Education, Victoria

The Hon R J Mulock MP
Minister for Education, New South Wales

The Hon R J Pearce MLA
Minister for Education, Western Australia

The Hon M B Perron, MLA
Minister for Education, Northern Territory

The Hon L W Powell MLA
Minister for Education, Queensland

Senator the Hon S M Ryan
Commonwealth Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
(Chairperson 46th meeting) *

The Hon M L Wellington MP
Minister of Education, New Zealand
(The New Zealand Minister attends Council meetings as an observer.)

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* Senator the Hon P E Baume was AEC Chairman from 1 January 1983 until 5 March 1983

APPENDIX II : EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STANDING COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee assists the Chairman in determining the agenda for Council meetings and has responsibilities for budgetary matters and the management of the Secretariat.

The first meeting of the Executive Committee took place on 20 August 1980. Committee membership was initially agreed by the Council to comprise nominees of the New South Wales, Victorian and Commonwealth Ministers and also of the Council Chairman of the day. Meetings are held prior to each Council meeting, and at other times as necessary with approximately five meetings being held each year.

The principal advisory group to the Council is the Standing Committee which is made up of members nominated by each Council member and normally selected from among the most senior officers in each State and Territory. The Standing Committee meets before Council meetings and considers all agenda items. The Standing Committee recommends possible courses of action for each item and, in this way, increases the productivity of the Council. Each Council member is briefed by his/her nominees on the Standing Committee before Council meetings.

APPENDIX III : WORKING PARTIES/COMMITTEES ACTIVE IN 1983

The detailed technical and analytical work of the Council is carried out by committees set up for particular tasks and serviced by the Secretariat. Typically, these committees and working parties consist of a nominee of each Minister together with, at times, representatives of other agencies and in 1983 included the following:

AEC Committee on School Statistics

(Chairman - Dr R L Vickery - Director-General of Education, Western Australia)

(Deputy Chairman - Mr J Quinn - Director of Planning, Education Department, Western Australia)

Information on this Committee is included earlier in the report.

AEC Working Party on Copyright Law

(Chairman - Mr R B Winder - Deputy Director-General of Education, New South Wales)

This Working Party was established following the Commonwealth Attorney-General's announcement that the Government would proceed to amend the Copyright Act along the lines recommended in the Franki Report on Reprographic Reproduction. The Working Party is concerned with protecting the interests of education institutions and has been active in having certain changes effected in the implementation of the Act.

Working Party on Information Retrieval Systems in Education

(Chairman - Mr K I Axton - Director-General of Education, Tasmania)

This Working Party was established to promote the co-ordination of information retrieval systems in education. Projects conducted under the aegis of this committee include the development of an Australian Thesaurus (to provide common core descriptors to be used by the various information networks), the publication of an annual listing of higher degree theses in education and the development of a co-operative curriculum information network involving all school systems.

Working Party on the Provision of Educational Services to Aboriginal Homeland Centres

(Chairman - Mr S S Saville - Secretary, Department of Education, Northern Territory)

The aim of this Committee was to consider policies in response to the movement of Aboriginal people to homeland centres and the need to provide educational services in these centres.

Committee on the Educational Use of Communications Technology

(Chairman - Mr J P Burnett - Assistant Secretary, Education Planning Group, Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs)

At the 46th meeting, Council endorsed the terms of reference of this Committee which are to advise Council on the long term implications for education systems of development in communications technology and to recommend and evaluate a balanced program of trials in the use of communications technology in education.

AEC History Advisory Committee

(Chairman - Dr L W Shears - Co-ordinator-General of Education, Victoria)

At the 47th meeting, Council authorised the preparation of a history of the AEC to commemorate the first fifty years of the Council's operation. Dr A D Spaull of Monash University has been commissioned as the author of the public history and this Advisory Committee serves to assist the author in its development.

APPENDIX IV : SOME RECENT AEC PUBLICATIONS

Comparative Capital Costs of Government and Non-Government Schools in Australia, April 1978, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1978.

The report is the outcome of a co-operative study of building costs of government and non-government schools in Australia. The Study includes:

- comparisons of building costs of government and non-government schools in each State and Territory and reasons for divergences in costs;
- comparisons of present norms and guidelines for new facilities in government and non-government schools in each State and Territory and reasons for divergences in norms and guidelines; and
- recommendations on building costs, based on realistic and economical norms and guidelines to the Australian Education Council for consideration by all educational authorities.

Report of the Working Party on Education and Employment presented to the 39th meeting of the Australian Education Council, June 1979, Australian Education Council, Melbourne, 1979.

The Report presents information on programs being undertaken or contemplated to facilitate the transition of young people from school to possible employment and recommends the further development of practical action by State and Commonwealth authorities.

Bibliography of Education Theses in Australia, 1980 Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Victoria, 1982.

A bibliography of higher degree theses (about the study of education) accepted by Australian universities and colleges in 1980 and 1982. The publication is derived from selected records in the Australian Education Index database.

A further edition of this publication was released in 1983 to cover higher degree theses for 1981.

Transition Education and the Disabled: A Bibliography prepared by the AEC Standing Committee on Transition Education, Victorian Government Printer for the Australian Education Council, Melbourne, 1981.

A bibliography published during the International Year of the Disabled Person to aid in disseminating research findings and descriptions of programs to assist teachers and employers to better understand the needs, capabilities and career aspirations of handicapped school leavers.

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy: 1980 - A Report to the Australian Education Council on the Australian Studies in Student Performance Project, by S F Bourke et al, Australian Government Publishing Service for the Australian Education Council, Canberra, 1981.

The Australian Studies in Student Performance Project consisted of surveys of samples of children aged 10-14 in all Australian States and Territories. Children were tested in reading, writing and numeration.

A Summary Report of the Australian Studies in Student Performance Project, by S F Bourke et al, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic, 1981.

The Changing Patterns of School Enrolments and their Implications for Educational Policy and Management: Report to the Australian Education Council, prepared by the Centre of Policy Studies, Monash University, Australian Government Publishing Service for the Australian Education Council, Canberra, 1981.

A study of changing patterns of school enrolments and related issues, and their current and anticipated effects on education systems.

Resource Allocation in the Government Schools of Australia and New Zealand: A Summary of the Report of the Staffing and Resources Study by John Ainley et al, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic, 1982.

A Staffing and Resources Study was funded by the Australian Education Council and conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research. The Study had seven terms of reference designed to guide it; two of these were:

. to examine existing policies, procedures and trends

relating to the allocation of staff and resources to and within Australian and New Zealand schools; and

- to develop proposals which school systems in the longer term might adopt for the future direction of policies and procedures concerning the allocation of staff and resources to and within schools.

The above publication is a summary of the three detailed reports listed immediately below:

Patterns of School Organisation: Resources and Responses in Sixteen Schools, by Andrew Sturman, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic, 1982. (Staffing and Resources Study Report No 1)

Six Hundred Schools: A Study of Resources Allocation Policies in the Government School Systems of Australia and New Zealand, by John Ainley, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic, 1982. (Staffing and Resources Study Report No 2)

Eight Education Systems: Resource Allocation Policies in the Government School Systems of Australia and New Zealand, by Phillip McKenzie and John Keeves, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic, 1982. (Staffing and Resources Study Report No 3)

National Schools Collection: Government Schools Australia, 1981, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 1982. Catalogue No 4215.0.

The statistics in this publication relate to establishments operated by State Directors-General of Education (or their equivalent) and which have as their major activity the administration or provision of full-time day primary, day secondary or special education, or primary or secondary education by radio or correspondence. The statistics are drawn from a collection conducted by the AEC Committee on School Statistics in 1981.

Enrolments in Australian Schools: Report to the Australian Education Council, prepared by the Steering Committee for a Co-operative Study of School Enrolment Patterns, Australian Government Publishing Service for the Australian Education Council, Canberra, 1982.

Each State and Territory education system provided enrolment data from the early 1960s. The data have been drawn together in this report to provide comparative information for each system and for Australia. In addition, each system

submitted commentary and analysis in relation to enrolment patterns.

Report of Official Visit to West Germany to Observe the Operation of Education Systems, March 1982, by R K Browne, Australian Education Council, Melbourne, 1982.

During March 1982, the AEC Secretary, Dr R K Browne, visited the Federal Republic of Germany as a guest of the West German Government to observe the operation of the education systems. The operation of the AEC's counterpart in West Germany - the KMK - is described and some general observations are presented.

AEC Policy Directory - Volume 1, 1982

This Volume is an indexed guide to decisions of the 38th-45th AEC meetings. It is for internal distribution within the Council and is continually upgraded to incorporate the decisions of subsequent meetings.

Review of the Operations and Structure of the Secretariat of the Australian Education Council, 1982 (Restricted)

This Review was undertaken and the report prepared by Mr G J Spring (Deputy Secretary, Northern Territory Department of Education) at the request of the AEC during late 1981 to early 1982. The report was for internal distribution within the Council.

Registration of Non-Government Schools: A Report of the Australian Education Council, Australian Government Publishing Service for the Australian Education Council, Canberra, 1983.

A report on the rationale, criteria and procedure for registration of non-government schools in Australia.

The 1983 Cost Study: The Comparative Capital Costs for Australian Schools, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1983.

A joint study of the capital costs of government and non-government schools in Australia which reviews, updates and expands the 1978 Cost Study.

Australian Education Thesaurus, (forthcoming), Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic.

The US ERIC Thesaurus was used as the basis for a thesaurus of Australian education terms suitable for indexing and retrieving documentary information in computer-based information retrieval systems.

Further information on these publications may be obtained by contacting:

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